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Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Letter dated 17 August 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) of 11 August 2006, which authorized an expansion of the numbers, mandate and scope of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), will require extensive augmentation of the support infrastructure and sustainment capabilities of the mission.

To facilitate and support the rapid deployment of the additional UNIFIL troops as well as the deployment of Lebanese Armed Forces within the envisaged time frame, it is necessary for the Secretariat to exercise some flexibility in the application of administrative policies and procedures. I have the honour of informing Member States of the extraordinary measures that I have exceptionally authorized to enable the Secretariat to efficiently and effectively respond to the demands placed upon it in implementing Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). These measures include the following:

(a) Waiver of the two-month notification process to all Member States for gratis personnel, as an exception to administrative instruction ST/AI/1999/6 based on General Assembly resolution 51/243 of 15 September 1997, to allow existing and potential UNIFIL troop-contributing countries to assist with the urgent need for military planners;

(b) The immediate reassignment of civilian personnel without advertisement of the posts and with, as appropriate, existing delegations of authority, pending completion of the designation process under ST/SGB/2005/7 of 13 April 2005;

(c) Relief from the present three-month limit on temporary deployment of civilian staff;

(d) An immediate increase in the not-to-exceed level of existing main-commodity contracts, in particular for fuel, rations, water and accommodation, for UNIFIL, as well as for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), which will provide initial forward logistics support to UNIFIL;

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(e) An increase in the procurement delegations of UNIFIL and UNFICYP for a period of six months to facilitate the immediate sustainment and development of the expanded Force.

In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994, I have sought the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to enter into commitments not to exceed $50 million to meet the most immediate needs of the UNIFIL expansion. In addition, I have informed the Advisory Committee that the appropriation of $97,579,600, approved by the General Assembly for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 under the terms of its resolution 60/278 of 30 June 2006, shall be utilized flexibly to meet the requirements of the expansion of UNIFIL.

It is also my intention that the immediate requirement of $50 million shall be supplemented by a request for commitment authority, with assessment, covering the interim period from 11 August 2006 to 31 March 2007, which will be submitted to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee for consideration at the regular part of its sixty-first session. This interim financing request would facilitate the initial establishment of the mission's operations in the next few months, which would enable the formulation of more concrete and detailed budgetary proposals for consideration and approval by the Assembly in the main part of is sixty-first session.

A planning team has been assembled at New York Headquarters and will shortly be deploying to UNIFIL to assess the support requirements needed to implement Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**